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## ABSTRACT

An attempt was made to identify variables associated with black mothers in a high risk community who stayed on welfare, who moved off welfare, who moved on and off welfare, and who did not participate in welfare. Three kinds of variables were explored to explain such variations in welfare participation: (1) social origin characteristics, (2) social and personal characteristics, and (3) each woman's family situation. Data from interviews conducted in 1975 with 826 black women who had participated in the 1967 Woodlawn study of mothers or mother surrogates of first grade children are included in the present study. The 1975 interviews focused on the same four broad categories of information that had been studied in 1967, with the additional category of stressful events that might have occurred to a family member since 1967. This report focuses on the mother's account of her own mental health, her activities, her values, and the family's socioeconomic and occupational circumstances, composition, religion, and activities. A six-item index of welfare status was constructed to provide an indication of the respondent's welfare dependency over time. Welfare status was cross-tabulated with various background, personal, and family characteristics to provide a descriptive analysis of welfare status. The multivariate impact of these characteristics on welfare status was subsequently examined. Results, indicating the importance of family type in influencing welfare status and the contradicting findings of the Moynihan Report (1965), are discussed. (Author/RH).

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Welfare: Its Relationship to Social Origins  
Personal and Family Characteristics

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study project from which this essay comes started with the Woodlawn Mental Health Center in 1963. Between 1964 and 1969 assessments of the mental health of all first graders in Woodlawn were made at several points in each school year. Interviews were also conducted with mothers of the children who were in first grade in two of those years. In 1975-76, the 1966-67 first graders and their families were followed-up and reassessed under the auspices of the Southside Youth Program. These assessments were coupled with service and evaluation programs directed partly at systematically developing methods of community-wide prevention and early intervention.

In all of these service and research ventures, the project was supported by a community board composed of leaders from the community's larger citizen organizations. The support and assistance of this board has been essential throughout the course of this work. Recently Mrs. Rose Bates, member of the Community Advisory Committee, has been particularly important to this work.

Sheppard G. Kellam, M. D. and Jeannette Branch M. A., have been the two key professional staff who have directed the research and service aspects of this project. While they have collaborated on most aspects of the work, Kellam has been and is responsible for designing and directing the research and Branch has since 1970 designed and directed the treatment program. I am very indebted to these two for their teaching, support and collaboration. I am also grateful to the other staff at the Social Psychiatry Study Center, Department of Psychiatry for their assistance.

This essay is adapted from a chapter of my dissertation. Professor Terry N. Clark is chairman of the dissertation committee, and Professors Edward O. Laumann and Gerald Suttles are members of that committee. I would like to

thank them for their help and guidance.

The research for this project has been supported by the following earlier grants: State of Illinois Department of Mental Health, Grant Numbers 17-224 and 17-332; the Public Health Service, Grant Number MH-15760; the Maurice Falk Medical Fund. The follow-up study was supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Grant Number DA-00787, and the State of Illinois Department of Mental Health Grant Number DMH 820-02 has contributed funds to analyses of the follow-up data.

The expansion of the welfare program during the 1960's and the early 1970's has attracted much attention by social scientists, who have studied the impact of the welfare system on society (Janowitz, 1976), the relationship of the labor market and the welfare system (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965), the social control function of welfare (Cloward and Piven, 1971) and the impact of job training on welfare recipients (Klausner, 1972).

Characteristics of welfare recipients that distinguish them from persons not on welfare have received inadequate attention from social scientists. A focus on individuals within a high risk population for welfare observed at two points in time may reveal not only the influences crucial to participation in a welfare program but also what distinguishes those women who stay on welfare, those women who move off welfare, those women who move on welfare and those women who do not receive welfare. The aim of this study is to examine these influences.

The population for this study consists of such a high risk population observed at two points in time eight years apart. Woodlawn, a black community on the south side of Chicago, is where the women in this study lived in 1966-67. Woodlawn had the fifth highest percentage of families receiving public aid among Chicago's 76 community areas; 23.2 percent of Woodlawn families were receiving aid in 1969 as compared to 7.4 percent for the City of Chicago as a whole (Council for Community Services in Metropolitan Chicago, 1975).

An aim of this research, then is to examine individual characteristics that may help explain participation in the welfare program in a

high risk community: who stays on welfare, who moves on welfare, who moves off welfare and who does not participate at all. Three kinds of variables are explored that may account for such variations in welfare participation.

1. Social origin characteristics may influence later welfare status. These include whether a woman's parents received welfare while she was growing up, the period in which she grew up, the region of the country where she grew up, and the size of the place where she grew up.
2. Social and personal characteristics may reflect differing needs with regard to welfare. Her health, level of education, and geographic mobility are the personal variables we examine in relation to welfare status.
3. Finally, the woman's family situation--family type, number of children and presence of preschool children--might affect her welfare participation.

#### Study Population

Of the 1242 parents of the first-graders that were interviewed in 1967 in connection with the Woodlawn study, 937 mothers or mother surrogates were reinterviewed in 1975. Interviews were designed to collect data from all the mothers or mother surrogates of all the 1966-67

first graders in Woodlawn concerning four broad realms of information:

1. child-rearing practices of the family and family interactions with the child,
2. the mother's ratings of the first grade child's social

social adaptational status and psychiatric symptomatology, 3. the mother's account of her own mental health, her activities, her values and 4. the family's socioeconomic and occupational circumstance, family composition, religion and family activities. Only the third and fourth category of variables will be considered in the present work.

In the spring and summer of 1967, interviews were conducted in the homes of the respondents by trained National Opinion Research Center interviewers. The interviewers were women and were black.

In 1975, these same women were reinterviewed in their homes. The same four realms of information were obtained with an additional category of the stressful events that might have occurred to a family member since 1967. The interviews were conducted in the summer and fall of 1975. The Institute of Social Action, a Chicago-based survey research firm, conducted the interviews. Again, the interviewers were black women who were trained interviewers. A few interviewers participated in both waves of the interviews.

Of the 937 women interviewed in 1975, 826 were actually the mothers (as distinguished from grandmothers, guardians or aunts) interviewed in both 1967 and 1975 and will be included in the study population.

These women have the following characteristics in common: (1) they all lived in Woodlawn in 1967; (2) they all lived in Chicago or the surrounding area in 1975; (3) they all had a child in a first grade classroom in a Woodlawn school in 1967; (4) they are all black and (5) they have all been interviewed at two points in time, 1967 and 1975.

This paper concerns the effects of women's social origins, social and personal characteristics, health status and family circumstances on their income sources. Women in the same geographic area, of similar age, each with a child in First Grade in 1966-1967, but having differing income sources, will be compared. First, however, I will describe the welfare variable.

Welfare: How it is defined.

Welfare status is determined by the main source(s) of income of the respondent. In the 1967 interviews, we asked the respondents for their main source of income; but in 1975, we asked for the main sources of income--i.e. we allowed for more than one main source. Although the information from the two years is, for this reason, not exactly comparable, the following comparisons may be made: In both years the most frequently reported main sources of income are wages or salary and Aid to Families of Dependent Children (AFDC). See Table 1: Less than 10 percent of the respondents listed any other category as a main income source in either interview. More respondents said in 1967 that wages or salary was the main source of income, 63.9 percent, than did in 1975, 59.4 percent, even though they could have included more than one source of income in the latter interview. This decrease of almost five percent probable reflects the increase in the unemployment rate between 1967 and 1975.

In this study, those women are considered as welfare recipients who reported either General Welfare Assistance or AFDC as a main source



Table 1.

Status of the Follow-Up Mother Interview

	<u>N</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Completed Interviews	937	75.4
Moved Out of Chicago	81	6.5
Follow-Up Student Deceased	4	0.3
Refusals	74	6.0
Cannot Locate	<u>146</u>	<u>11.8</u>
	1242	100.0

of income. No other women are considered welfare recipients. In 1967, 266 respondents (32 percent) were receiving welfare and 566 respondents (68 percent) were not.

In 1975, of the 392 women who reported either General Welfare Assistance or AFDC, 138 reported at least one additional source of income. Hence, instead of dichotomizing income source, I trichotomized it: Welfare only, Welfare plus another source of income, and Not receiving welfare. Table 2 shows the additional sources of income reported by those receiving welfare. Most women reporting welfare as a main source of income reported it as the only source; wages or salary is the most frequent additional source.

In summary, Table 3 shows the distributions of welfare status from 1967 and 1975. In 1967, 32 percent of the women reported that welfare was their main source of income, and in 1975, 46.1 percent. The increase is probably due to an increase in welfare received in this population, rather than to the different way we asked about income sources in the two years.

#### STABILITY OF WELFARE STATUS

Are the women who in 1967 (time 1) received welfare the same women who were receiving it in 1975 (time 2), or is welfare status temporary and transient in this population? Table 4 shows the cross-tabulation of the main sources of income for 1967 and 1975. About half the women who reported being on welfare in 1967 report welfare

as their only source of income in 1975; another 30 percent are still receiving welfare even though they have an additional source of income. Over 70 percent of those who did not receive welfare in 1967 are not receiving welfare in 1975. Thus, while there is some redistribution between the welfare and not-welfare categories, there is a fairly strong tendency for women to be in the same welfare category in 1975 as in 1967.

#### AN INDEX OF WELFARE STATUS

A six item index of welfare status has been constructed that provides an indication of the respondent's welfare dependency over time. An individual on welfare at neither time is considered the least welfare dependent, and an individual on welfare at both times is considered the most welfare dependent. An individual who is on welfare at one time and not on welfare at the other time is considered as either increasing or decreasing her welfare dependency and is ranked accordingly. Receiving welfare as well as another source of income is considered as more welfare dependent than not receiving welfare at all, but less welfare dependent than only receiving welfare.

- 1 = On welfare, time 1; only supported by welfare, time 2 (N=140).
- 2 = Not welfare, time 1; welfare only, time 2 (N=101).
- 3 = Welfare, time 1; welfare and other, time 2 (N=78).
- 4 = Not welfare, time 1; welfare and other, time 2 (N=58).
- 5 = Welfare, time 1; not welfare, time 2 (N=47).
- 6 = Not welfare, time 1; not welfare, time 2 (N=395).

The main principles for the above ordering are as follows: (1) time 2 welfare status gets higher priority in the ordering than does time 1 welfare status. Change in welfare status; then, is ranked according to whether an individual increases or decreases her welfare status between time 1 and time 2. (2) The ranking from the most welfare dependent to the least welfare dependent goes from only supported by welfare, to supported by welfare and another source of income to not supported by welfare. For example, category 2 and 3 above are ranked as they are because the time 2 welfare status (welfare and other) of category 3 is less welfare dependent than the time 2, welfare status of category 2 (welfare only). However, category 4 is ranked higher than category 3 because even though the time 2 welfare status is the same, the category 4 time 1 welfare status (not supported by welfare) is less welfare dependent than the category 3 time 1 welfare status (welfare only).

In this paper, I examine welfare status in relation to the women's social origins, their personal characteristics, and their family situation. The primary analytic tool will be crosstabulation of welfare status with the various background, personal and family characteristics; this will provide a descriptive analysis of welfare status. Subsequently, we will examine the multivariate impact of these characteristics on welfare status.

This study differs from many other studies of poverty and welfare in two respects: 1) It is a two-wave study based on interviews with the same respondents at two points in time that are eight years apart. 2) The respondents are all from the same neighborhood, are all black, and all have children. The differences found, then, may be attributed to the variations that do exist within this relatively homogeneous population, rather than to the characteristics that distinguish it as a collectivity from the rest of society.

#### SOCIAL ORIGINS

A major reason for studying how an individual's social origins relate to welfare status is to show the relation of one's life chances to the social circumstances--parental background, regional variations, urban vs. rural variations--in which he is brought up. The study of social origins relates a present to a past social position, and attempts to help answer the more general question of how individuals come to occupy different social positions. The major objectives of much of the research on social origins have been to describe and to account for the amount and pattern of mobility in society as a whole, and to identify those variables related to individual mobility. For Present purposes, the questions become, What people are welfare recipients? and Does the longitudinal course of welfare status for women with different social origins differ?

Studies of intergenerational social mobility, which have compared occupational positions of parent and offspring, have attempted to

In discussing the reasons for mobility between the bottom third of the stratification system and the other two-thirds, Miller and Roby (1970) conclude that only a longitudinal study of families with an oversampling of the poor and near poor can provide answers.

In a more recent review of social problems research, while Kohn (1976) credits research on poverty for challenging the basic assumption that the causes of poverty lie in the poor, he makes suggestions about what is needed in future research. He cites the need for studies that would focus on the psychological impact of change in the life-circumstances of individuals.

Thus, the advantages of this study lie, in part, in its adequate sample size, observations of the same individual at two points in time, a high proportion of poor in the sample, its focus on what influences welfare, and its focus on the psychological impact of welfare and change in welfare.

Women in the same geographic area, of similar age, each with a child in first grade in a Woodlawn school in 1966-67, but having different income sources will be compared. Welfare status is the central variable in this research.

#### Welfare: How it is defined

Welfare status is determined by the main source(s) of income of the respondent. In the 1967 interviews, we asked the respondents for their main source of income; but in 1975, we asked for the main sources of income--i.e. we allowed for more than one main source. Although the information from the two interviews is, for this reason, not exactly

comparable, the following comparisons may be made: In both years the most frequently reported main sources of income are wages or salary and Aid to Families of Dependent Children (AFDC). See Table 2. Less than 10 percent of the respondents listed any other category as a main source in either interview. More respondents said in 1967 that wages or salary was the main source of income, 63.9 percent, than did in 1975, 59.4 percent, even though they could have included more than one source of income in the latter interview. This decrease of almost five percent reflects the increase in the unemployment rate between 1967 and 1975.

In this study, those women are considered as welfare recipients who reported either General Welfare Assistance or AFDC as a main source of income. No other women are considered welfare recipients. In 1967, 266 respondents (32 percent) were receiving welfare and 566 respondents (68 percent) were not.

In 1975, of the 392 women who reported either General Welfare Assistance or AFDC, 138 reported at least one additional source of income. Hence, instead of dichotomizing income source, it is trichotomized in 1975: Welfare only, Welfare plus another source of income, and Not receiving welfare. Most women reporting welfare as a main source of income reported it as the only source; wages or salary is the most frequent additional source.

In summary, in 1967, 32 percent of the women reported that welfare was their main source of income, and in 1975, 46.1 percent. The increase is probably due to an increase in welfare received in this population, rather than to the different way we asked about income.

Table 2

Distribution of Main Source(s) of Income  
for 1967 and 1975

Main Source of Income (1967)		
Wages, Salary	63.9	(532)
Business, Profession	1.2	(10)
Social Security	1.7	(14)
Government Pension	0.5	(4)
Private Pension	0.2	(2)
Old Age Assistance	0	(0)
General Welfare Assistance	1.7	(14)
Aid to Families of Dependent Children	30.3	(252)
Interest, Dividends, Insurance	0.1	(1)
Rent	0.1	(1)
Cash Contributions	0.2	(2)
Percentages are column percents		

Main Sources of Income (1975)			
	Yes		No
Wages, Salary	59.4	(490)	40.6 (335)
Business, Profession	1.0	(8)	99.0 (817)
Social Security	9.1	(75)	90.0 (750)
Government Pension	2.3	(19)	97.7 (806)
Old Age Assistance	0.4	(3)	99.6 (822)
Alimony/Child Support	3.8	(31)	96.2 (794)
General Welfare Assistance	4.8	(40)	95.2 (785)
Aid to Families of Dependent Children	42.6	(352)	57.4 (475)
Cash Contributions	6.3	(53)	93.7 (773)
Other	4.4	(36)	95.6 (789)
Percentages are row percents			



sources in the two years. The AFDC rolls were increasing in Chicago during at least part of that time period. There was a 53 percentage increase in AFDC welfare in Chicago from 1964-1969 (Piven and Cloward, 1971).

### Stability of Welfare Status

Are the women who in 1967 (time 1) received welfare the same women who were receiving it in 1975 (time 2), or is welfare status temporary and transient in this population? Table 3 shows the cross tabulation of the main sources of income for 1967 and 1975. About half the women who reported being on welfare in 1967 report welfare as their only source of income in 1975; another 30 percent are still receiving welfare even though they have an additional source of income. Over 70 percent of those who did not receive welfare in 1967 are not receiving welfare in 1975. Thus, while there is some redistribution between the welfare and not-welfare categories, there is a fairly strong tendency for women to be in the same welfare category in 1975 as in 1967.

### An Index of Welfare Status

A six item index of welfare status has been constructed that provides an indication of the respondent's welfare dependency over time. An individual on welfare at neither time is considered the least welfare dependent, and an individual on welfare at both times

Table 3

Sources of Income of Women in  
1967 and in 1975

		1967 Source		
		Wages and Other	Welfare	Total
1975 Source	Wages and other (Not Welfare)	70.9 (398)	17.7 (47)	53.8 445
	Welfare and other	10.7 (60)	29.4 (78)	16.7 138
	Welfare Only	18.4 (103)	52.8 (140)	29.4 243
	Total	67.9 561	32.1 265	826

Percents are column percents

is considered the most welfare dependent. An individual who is on welfare at one time and not on welfare at the other time is considered as either increasing or decreasing her welfare dependency and is ranked accordingly. Receiving welfare as well as another source of income is considered as more welfare dependent than not receiving welfare at all, but less welfare dependent than only receiving welfare.

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The main principles for the above ordering are as follows: (1) time 2 welfare status gets higher priority in the ordering than does time 1 welfare status. Change in welfare status, then, is ranked according to whether an individual increases or decreases her welfare dependency between time 1 and time 2; (2) the ranking from the most welfare dependent to the least welfare dependent goes from only supported by welfare, to supported by welfare and another source of income to not supported by welfare. For example, category 2 and 3 above are ranked as they are because the time 2 welfare status (welfare and other) of category 3 is less welfare dependent than the time 2, welfare status of category 2 (welfare only). However, category 4 is ranked higher than category 3 because their time 1 welfare statuses differ. Women in category 4 were not receiving welfare at time 1 while those in category 3, were.

We will examine individual characteristics that may help explain participation in the welfare program in a high risk community: who stays on welfare, who moves on welfare, who moves off welfare and who does not participate at all. Four kinds of variables are explored that may account for such variations in welfare participation.

1. Social origin characteristics may influence later

welfare status. These include whether a woman's parents received welfare while she was growing up, the region of the country where she grew up, and the size of the place where she grew up.

2. Social and personal characteristics may reflect

differing needs with regard to welfare. Her age, level of education, and geographic mobility are the personal variables we examine in relation to welfare status.

3. The physical and psychological well-being of the

respondent may affect the women's motivation and ability to seek and gain employment.

4. The woman's family situation--family type, number

of children and presence of preschool children--might affect her welfare participation.

We will first examine crosstabulations of welfare status with the various background, personal and family characteristics; this will provide a descriptive analysis of welfare status. Subsequently, we will examine multiple regression analyses with welfare as the dependent variable and examine the combined impact of these characteristics on welfare status.

## Social Origins

A major reason for studying how an individual's social origins relate to welfare status is to show the relation of one's life chances to the social circumstances--parental background, regional variations, urban vs. rural variations--in which he is brought up. The study of social origins relates a present to a past social position, and attempts to help answer the more general question of how individuals come to occupy different social positions. The major objectives of much of the research on social origins have been to describe and to account for the amount and pattern of mobility in society as a whole, and to identify those variables related to individual mobility. For present purposes, the questions become, do social origins differentiate those who are welfare recipients from those who are not and does the longitudinal course of welfare status for women with different social origins differ?

Studies of intergenerational social mobility, which have compared occupational positions of parent and offspring, have attempted to measure the extent to which social position is determined by the social position of the family of orientation (Blau and Duncan, 1967, Goldhammer, 1968). Much has been made of statistics that indicate that a large proportion of welfare recipients comes from families of orientation that also received welfare payments. Proponents of the concept that the poor have a distinctive cultural system that is passed from generation to generation - the "culture of poverty" - have used as evidence the continuity across generations of families on relief.

Burgess and Price (1963) found that up to 40 percent of families on AFDC came from families of orientation that were themselves on relief rolls. However, a study by Cox in New York (1968) reported a much lower percentage; 15 percent of mothers on welfare (21 percent of black mothers) reported that their parents had received public assistance.

Mojo (1975) compared three groups of Cook County, Illinois, welfare recipients--those getting on welfare, those staying on and those getting off--and found that placement of an individual into one of these groups was not related to whether her guardian had received aid.

This evidence is difficult. It is less than consistent, but even if there were repeatedly high proportions of welfare recipients coming from families of orientation that received welfare, such evidence would not demonstrate the "culture of poverty." Studies of intergenerational mobility, in general, indicate that, although there is considerable intergenerational movement up and down the social ladder, many children hold, as adults, the same occupational ranking as their parents. One would not expect welfare families to differ in this regard.

In asking about the welfare status of a woman's family of orientation, we expect that there is some relation between it and her own welfare status; we are more interested in the strength of the relation.

Another social origin characteristic which may differentiate women on welfare from women not on welfare is the region of the country where they grew up. Past literature is inconsistent about the relationship that we might expect from this social origin variable and welfare status. Both social scientists and the news media have asserted

that higher welfare payments in the North have encouraged blacks to migrate there from the South. Matza (1971) describes what he calls the "disreputable poor" as including recent arrivals to the cities, among them, southern blacks who have recently arrived in the North.

Moynihan (1968) was more explicit about the connection between higher welfare payments in the North and black migration. He stated, (p.28) "the differential in payments between jurisdictions has to encourage some migration toward urban centers in the North."

Authors in both Time Magazine (1972) and The Wall Street Journal (Garnett, 1971) have assumed that southern blacks are attracted to the North because welfare payments are better. If these speculations are correct then we would expect that women raised in the South would be more likely to be welfare recipients than those who grew up in the North..

However, in a study conducted in the six U.S. cities with the largest black populations, Long (1971) found that the blacks most likely to be poor and on welfare in any city were those born and raised in that city. Only the most recent arrivals in a city from the South were found to have rates of poverty and welfare dependency as high as blacks born and raised there. Long concluded that black migrants have accounted for a proportionately smaller increase in the welfare rolls than native black residents.

In a recent article, Lieberman (1978) shows that many southern black who migrate North and who do not fare well in the North return again to the South. Hence, in our study those respondents who were

raised in the South and who were still in the Chicago area at the time of the second interview may really be those who have been more successful in the North, and we would expect them to be less welfare dependent.

Whether the respondent grew up in a rural setting, an urban setting, a small town or a medium sized city may also affect her welfare status. Those who describe northward migration for the sake of better welfare payments imply that the change from a rural to an urban setting, too, influences welfare status, because women who have grown up in a rural area would not be as able to cope with housing and employment in a city, and are more likely to depend on welfare agencies for assistance.

McElrath (1965) in discussing migration status refers to this change--the extent to which residential mobility represents mobility across social boundaries--an Appalachian miner's move to Chicago, to an urban environment, is, presumably, more unsettling than a New York suburbanite to a Chicago Suburb.

How much do past social positions and experiences influence welfare status?--this is the major issue here concerning background characteristics. If social origins are highly correlated with welfare status, then, one would assume, in this population that impact of current characteristics and circumstances is lessened; the women's current roles and statuses are not as important in determining their individual behavior as the confines of earlier circumstances. If, on the other hand, social origins are not related to later welfare status and behavior, then the importance of the more current individual circumstances is enhanced.



## Results

Whether their parents received welfare, whether they grew up in the South, whether they grew up in a rural or an urban area--these measures of the women's social origins are examined in relation to their later welfare status.

In the 1975 interview, we asked the women "When you were growing up, did your family ever receive any kind of aid from the county or state (excluding GI benefits)?" Answers to this question were the bases for determining whether the respondents' families had received welfare.

About 18 percent of the women reported that their families had received welfare. (See Table 4.) Women who had never received welfare were less likely to report that their parents had received aid than women who had received it; this relationship is statistically significant but weak. However, the differences among the welfare-receiving groups are neither striking nor predictably ordered. One would have expected the women in group 1--welfare, time 1 and time 2--to report the highest proportion of parents receiving aid, but three other groups report higher proportions.

Over half the respondents (55.9 percent) grew up in the South. Whether they grew up in the North or in the South did not relate to their later welfare status. Thus, there is no evidence from this population that whether the women were from the North or the South made any difference to their welfare status. Eighty-eight percent of the Northerners were from Chicago.

Urban-rural differences do not relate to welfare status. There is a trend that those who grew up in an urban area seem more likely to be on welfare at both time 1 and time 2 than

Table 4

Welfare Status  
by:  
Whether Parents Received Welfare.

	Parents Received Welfare	Parents Did Not Receive Welfare
Group 1: Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	20.7 (29)	79.3 (111)
Group 2: Not Welfare Time 1, Welfare Time 2	15.7 (16)	84.3 (86)
Group 3: Welfare Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2	24.4 (19)	75.6 (59)
Group 4: Not welfare, Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2	26.7 (16)	73.3 (44)
Group 5: Welfare, Time 1, Not Welfare Time 2	25.5 (12)	74.5 (35)
Group 6: Not Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	14.0 (55)	86.0 (338)
Total		

Percentages are row percents

$$\chi^2 = 12.37, 5 \text{ df.}; p \leq .05.$$

women from other areas but this is not statistically significant.

One may conclude from these results that although there is some association, there is by no means a strong relationship between welfare status and the welfare status of the family of orientation. Little evidence appears here for a vicious circle of welfare in the sense of "once in a welfare family, always in a welfare family."

Secondly, there is no relationship in this population between being from the South and welfare status, or between being from a rural area and welfare status. Whatever the popular and media image about the migration of blacks to northern cities, there is no evidence in this population that migrants from the South are more likely to be welfare recipients than natives of the North. The data do reflect, however, an influx of Southerners to the North, as over half of the women reported having grown up in the South.

Social origin characteristics, as we have measured them, do not appear to have a strong impact on later welfare status. We need to look further for social and personal, well-being and family characteristics that influence welfare statuses of women in this population.

#### Social and Personal Characteristics

In this section, I will review some of the social and personal characteristics associated by past studies either with the participation of women in the labor force or with receiving welfare assistance. While, in theory, labor force participation and receiving welfare are not mutually exclusive, in this population the two have a very strong

inverse relation. Almost all the women who were welfare recipients were not in the labor force (99.46 percent), and 70 percent of the women not receiving welfare were in the labor force. I include among those in the labor force both those women who have a job and also those who are actively looking for work or are temporarily unemployed.

#### Education

Length of schooling has been an important variable in its relationship to both labor force participation of women and welfare status. In the United States as a whole, a far larger proportion of educated women are in the labor force than are less educated women (Women's Bureau, 1969). In a comparison of 447 welfare mothers with 102 working mothers in families without husbands, there was a larger proportion of high school graduates among the working women (Klausner, 1972).

In a study of social mobility among urban blacks, Peterson (1974) found education to be strongly associated with upward mobility. He states, "Education promotes upward mobility for the poor; lack of it promotes downward mobility for the nonpoor" (p. 58). Several studies have recently challenged the assumption that there is a strong influence of education level on social mobility (Jencks, et al. 1972; Boudon 1974). However, there may be a stronger relationship between education and social mobility in populations that are relatively homogeneous with regard to important social criteria. In Peterson's study of urban blacks or this study of Woodlawn women, we are more likely to observe a relationship between education level and social mobility than in the data based on national samples such as that used by Jencks et al. or Boudon.

How important is education in influencing welfare status? One way to examine this question is to compare the education of the different categories of welfare women. If education influences welfare status then we would predict that women on welfare at time 1 but not at time 2 have more schooling than women on welfare at both times and that women not receiving welfare at time 1 but receiving it at time 2 have less education than women not on welfare at either time.

The respondents reported in each interview the last grade in school that they had completed. Since level of education changed for very few of the women between the 1967 and 1975 interviews, I use here only the levels reported in 1967. These women, for the most part, are mothers who have finished their schooling, so it is reasonable that the education levels should not change between times 1 and 2.

About 41 percent of the respondents had finished high school.

The percentage having finished high school was differentially distributed by welfare status (see Table 5). Group 1 (Welfare, time 1 and 2) had the smallest proportion of high school graduates, while Group 6 (Not welfare, time 1 and 2) had the greatest--women in Group 6 were almost four times as likely to have finished high school as those in Group 1. Women on welfare at time 1 but not time 2 (Group 5) were more often high school graduates than were women on welfare at both times (Group 1 and Group 3). Women not on welfare at time 1 but on welfare at time 2 (Group 2) were less often high school graduates than women not on welfare at either time (Group 6). Welfare status, including changes in receiving welfare, is strongly related to having finished high school for women in this population.

Table 5

## Welfare Status and Education Level

	Education 1967	
	Less Than High School	High School or More
Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	85.7 (120)	14.3 (20)
Not Welfare Time 1, Welfare Time 2	72.8 (75)	27.2 (28)
Welfare Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2	74.4 (58)	25.6 (20)
Not Welfare, Time 1; Welfare and Other, Time 2	55.0 (33)	45.0 (27)
Welfare, Time 1, Not Welfare Time 2	53.2 (25)	46.8 (22)
Not Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	44.1 (175)	55.9 (222)

Percentages are row percents

### Geographic Mobility

Geographic mobility usually suggests migration from one region to another, or from one city to another. However, in writing on community attachment and on the social order of cities, two other variables become important: the length of residence within a community or neighborhood and geographic mobility within a city.

Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) found that the length of residence of individuals was the most powerful of five independent variables in affecting local social bonds (the other four variables were population size, density, social class and stage in the life cycle).

Johnston (1973) suggests that those who move frequently, even within city boundaries, lead more stressful lives.

Residential mobility hinders the development of local contacts and ties into community affairs. For child rearing women, a paucity of such contacts may inhibit both job opportunities themselves, and the development of prerequisites to the undertaking of employment, such as child care and transportation to work. We would expect more residential mobility would be related to more welfare dependency.

In this study, the measure of geographic mobility is based on the respondent's recollection of her mobility between the birth of her child who was in first grade in 1967, and time 1 itself, which was the end of the first grade year. The geographic mobility score is a combination of two measures of mobility obtained during the 1967 interview: 1) the number of times the respondent had moved since the birth of her first grade child; and 2) how long they had lived in Wood-

lawn (their current residence). These measures were combined in a single index of geographic mobility.<sup>1</sup>

The results show that women on welfare at both time 1 and time 2 had been more geographically mobile than the other women. (See Table 6) Women on welfare at neither time 1 or time 2 were more stable. It is important to note that this measure of geographic mobility reflects mobility prior to time 1. The results indicate, then, that women who are welfare recipients at both times of contact had a history of moving frequently and were less likely to have established a stable residence in either a house or a neighborhood. In contrast, women who were on welfare at neither time appear to be women who by time 1 have established a stable residence.

### Family Characteristics

#### Family Type

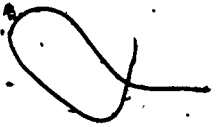
The family characteristics of women have been strongly associated to both labor force participation and welfare status. While marital status has been a secondary variable in analysing the male labor force, it is fundamental in understanding the female labor force. Even though the typical woman worker of today is a married woman of 40 (Women's Bureau, 1969), unmarried women who are heads of their families are more likely to be working than are women who are married (Morgan, et al., 1962). Unmarried women with children are more likely to be welfare

<sup>1</sup> In order to have the two measures of geographic mobility going in the same direction, the number of times moved was coded so that 0 moves = 0, 1 move = 1, 2-3 moves = 2, and 4 or more moves = 3 and the number of years she had lived in Woodlawn were recoded so 7 or more years = 0, 4-6 years = 1, 2-3 years = 2, and 1 or less years = 3.



Table 6

Distribution of Geographic Mobility  
by...  
Welfare Status.

	Low Mobility	High Mobility
Group 1: Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	35.0 (49)	65.0 (91)
Group 2: Not Welfare, Time 1, Welfare, Time 2	39.6 (40)	60.4 (61)
Group 3: Welfare, Time 1 Welfare and Other, Time 2	37.2 (29)	62.8 (49)
Group 4: Not Welfare, Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2	48.3 (28)	51.7 (30)
Group 5: Welfare, Time 1, Not Welfare Time 2	34.0 (16)	66.0 (31)
Group 6: Not Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	63.3 (250)	36.7 (145)
	50.3 (412)	49.7 (407)
Total		

$$\chi^2 = 54.83 \quad 5 \text{ df } p \leq 0.0000$$

recipients than other women. In fact, several studies of welfare seem to assume that welfare recipients are single women—who are either separated, divorced, widowed or never married—and do not mention their marital status.

In Peterson's study (1974) of occupational and economic mobility among urban blacks, being unmarried was a highly unfavorable characteristic, strongly associated with downward mobility for both men and women.

Morgan and his colleagues have recently reported that change in family status is highly associated with movement into poverty. (New York Times, July 17, 1977-) They studied income and income distribution in the United States by following 5000 families over a decade. One of the strongest predictors of entry into poverty is the breakup of a family unit that results in a female-headed family.

Several investigators have recently concerned themselves with the relationship between welfare status and family type. The concomitant rise in the number of families headed by women and the number of welfare recipients has led to speculation that the AFDC program itself has increased the number of female headed families (Cutright and Scanlon, 1973; Honig, 1974; Ross and Sawhill, 1975; and Hannan, et al., 1977). In a comparison of metropolitan areas, Honig found that the relative size of the welfare payment was positively related to the number of female-headed families and to the proportion of women receiving welfare payments. However, she concluded that while welfare programs did seem to contain some incentives for family dissolution, the vast majority of individuals who become welfare recipients were women never married or women who for a long time had been separated or divorced.

In a study of the experimental Income Maintenance programs, Hannon, et al. (1977) examined the impact on marriage dissolution and remarriage. They found that, overall, income maintenance raises the rate of marital dissolution. They concluded that marital decisions are much more responsive to short-term socioeconomic conditions than they or other social scientists would have anticipated. While income maintenance programs differ in a number of ways from welfare as used in this study, both provide an outside source of economic support to certain families, and this similarity make the findings from this income maintenance study relevant.

The question these results raise for our study is, how is family type related to welfare status? Does the relationship operate in both directions, i.e., are women who decrease their welfare dependency between time 1 and time 2 as likely to change their family type as women who increase their dependency during the nine year period?

The definition of family type for this study is based on the definition used in earlier studies of this same population of women. Because of earlier results showing the importance of any second adult in the family (Kellam, et al., 1977), I distinguish here only between the respondent alone household, a household in which the respondent is the only adult and the respondent/second adult household, where there is at least one other adult.

In order to include change in family type from time 1 to time 2 in the analysis, four different family types are defined:

1. Respondent alone, time 1; respondent alone, time 2 (N=184)
2. Respondent/second adult, time 1; respondent alone, time 2 (N=153)
3. Respondent alone, time 1; respondent/second adult, time 2 (N=119)
4. Respondent/second adult, time 1; respondent/second adult, time 2 (N=363)

The issue with regard to family type is how related it is to welfare status and change in welfare status from time 1 to time 2.

#### Number and Age of Children

The number and age of children have also been related to both labor force participation and welfare status. Bernard (1972) shows that for all women in the U.S. and for a sample of welfare women, women are more likely to be in the labor force if they have fewer children and if they have no preschool children. Mayo (1975) showed that, in a sample of Cook County welfare recipients, the number of children predicted welfare status, particularly for the more educated: For high school graduates, the number of children was strongly related to being a continuous welfare recipient, while for women with only a grammar school education, the number of children was not related to whether they remained welfare cases.

#### Results

Table 7 shows that every welfare category is associated with a family type category consistent with the hypothesis that family type and welfare status are very related and when one changes the other

also changes. Group 1 (welfare time 1 and 2) are much more likely to be in respondent alone families at both time 1 and time 2 and less likely to be in respondent/second adult, respondent/second adult families. Women not receiving welfare at time 1, but receiving welfare at time 2 (Groups 2 and 4) are likely to have changed their family type from respondent/second adult to respondent alone. Similarly, women who changed from receiving to not receiving welfare are more often found in the family type that changes from respondent alone to respondent/second adult. On table 7 these cells have been indicated with a box.

This important result indicates that not only is family type associated with becoming more welfare dependent but family type is also associated with becoming less welfare dependent--women who move off welfare between time 1 and time 2 are more likely to change from being the only adult in their family to being one of two adults. This finding that getting welfare is related to a change in family type has not been reported elsewhere.

Welfare status is also related to the presence of preschool children and the number of children in the family. (Table 8). About twice as many women on welfare at both time 1 and time 2 (Group 1) had preschool children at time 2 as did women who were on welfare at neither time (Group 6). These women all had first graders at time 1--the woman with a preschooler at time 2 had a sixteen year old as well. More welfare women had preschool children at time 1 also, but the difference was not so great.

Women on welfare at both times were also more likely to have more children. Table 8 shows the percentage of women who have

Table 7

Distribution of Long-Term Family Type  
by Long-Term Welfare Status

	Resp. Only Adult, Time 1 and Time 2	Resp./ 2nd Adult, Time 1; Resp. Only Adult, Time 2	Resp. Only Adult Time 1 Resp/2nd Adult, Time 2	Resp./ 2nd Adult, Time 1 and Time 2
Group 1: Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	62.1 (87)	10.7 (15)	17.9 (25)	9.3 (13)
Group 2: Not Welfare Time 1, Welfare Time 2	14.9 (15)	54.5 (55)	5.9 (6)	24.8 (25)
Group 3: Welfare Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2.	42.3 (33)	14.1 (11)	32.1 (25)	11.5 (9)
Group 4: Not Welfare, Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2	15.5 (9)	36.2 (21)	17.2 (10)	31.0 (18)
Group 5: Welfare, Time 1, Not Welfare Time 2	36.2 (17)	2.1 (1)	38.3 (18)	23.4 (11)
Group 6: Not Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2	5.8 (23)	12.7 (50)	8.9 (35)	72.7 (287)
Total	22.5 (184)	18.7 (153)	14.5 (119)	44.3 (363)

Percentages are row percents

$$\chi^2 = .462.08$$

15 df.

$$p \leq 0.0000$$

Table 8

Welfare Status by Whether Respondent had Preschool Children,  
and Number of Children

Group 1: Welfare, Time 1 and  
Time 2

N=140

Group 2: Not Welfare, Time 1,  
Welfare, Time 2

N=101

Group 3: Welfare, Time 1,  
Welfare and Other, Time 2

N=78

Group 4: Not Welfare, Time 1  
Welfare and Other, Time 2

N=58

Group 5: Welfare, Time 1,  
Not Welfare Time 2

N=47

Group 6: Not welfare, Time 1  
and Time 2

N=395

Total

Percentage of Respondents Who Had Preschool Children	
1967	1975
62.9	35.7
46.5	32.7
73.6	34.6
58.6	20.7
63.8	10.6
53.2	17.2
57.1	23.8

$\chi^2 = 20.86$   
5 df

$\chi^2 = 34.60$   
5 df

Percentage of Respondents with 4 or More Children
48.6
39.2
52.6
28.3
42.6
20.9

$\chi^2 = 47.94$   
5 df

four or more children in 1967 distributed by welfare status.

In summary, the family characteristics of women are strongly associated with their welfare status. Change in family type relates very strongly to change in receiving welfare. The number of children and the presence of preschool children at time 2 were also related to welfare status.

### Physical and Emotional Well-Being

Several studies have shown relationships between health disabilities and poverty or welfare status. In Peterson's study of mobility among blacks (1975), having a severe physical or mental disability had a depressing effect on income, especially for a woman in a female-only household--i.e., a household where the only adults were women. In addition, women in female-only households reported disabilities much more frequently (25 percent) than did men in male-only households (14 percent) or men or women in married households (less than 10 percent).

Cole and Lejeune (1972) however, argue that women on welfare perceive themselves as less healthy than other women as a way of legitimizing their failure. According to these authors, being on welfare is seen in society as a result of personal failure; women on welfare are prone to adopt the sick role in order to legitimize this failure.



Morgan et al. (1962), in a national survey, found that almost half of those families in which the head of the family was disabled were in the lowest category of income to need ratio. Of the seven likely causes of poverty investigated having a disabled family head was the second most predictive. Physical disability, thus, is consistently related to poverty and to welfare.

Many investigators have reported a disproportionate number of occupationally inadequate people among those defined as mentally ill (McCaffrey, Cumming and Rudolph 1963, Davis, Freeman and Simmons 1957, Monck 1963, Harrington and Wilkins 1966). Cumming (1963), a psychiatrist, pointed out that while it has been usual to think "...of phenomena such as the inability to hold a job as the results of illness," this is also evidence of ego failure and can equally be called a symptom of mental illness.

In 1967, we asked the respondents, "Does anyone in the household have any illness or condition that has lasted a long time, or that needs medicine regularly, or that limits their activity in any way?" The respondent was considered to be in the category of "poor health" if she answered that she herself had such an illness or condition. All other respondents were considered in the category of "good health."

The health measure in the 1975 interview asked the respondents to rank their health on a four-point scale from "very healthy" to "not at all healthy." For the purposes of these descriptive analyses, those women are considered in the category of "good health" who rated themselves in either of the top two ranks; those women are considered in the category of "poor health" who rated themselves in either of the bottom two ranks.

To see whether change or stability in welfare status from time 1 to time 2 is related to self-assessments of health at times 1 and 2, the health variables have been ordered in a fashion similar to the index of welfare status:

Poor Health, time 1; Poor Health, time 2	(N=41)
Good Health, time 1; Poor Health, time 2	(N=145)
Poor Health, time 1; Good Health, time 2	(N=46)
Good Health, time 1; Good Health, time 2	(N=597)

The majority of women, in fact, report good health at both time 1 and time 2 (see table 9). The group of the most welfare dependent women has the highest proportion reporting poor health at times 1 and 2, and the lowest proportion reporting good health at both times. The least welfare dependent women (Group 6) report the best health. These results, then, indicate that there is a relation between health and welfare. Neither the explanation that bad health leads women to become welfare recipients nor that welfare recipients report bad health for some other reason is clearly supportable from the data.

In both interviews we asked the women to state how often they felt (1) sad and blue and (2) nervous and tense. The scale for each item

Table 9

Distribution of Reports of Health  
by Welfare Status

	Poor Health Time 1 and Time 2	Good Health Time 1; Poor Health Time 2	Poor Health Time 1; Good Health Time 2	Good Health Time 1 and Time 2
Group 1: Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2 n=140	14.3	29.3	5.0	51.4
Group 2: Not Welfare Time 1, Welfare Time 2 n=101	5.9	29.7	3.0	61.4
Group 3: Welfare Time 1 Welfare and Other, Time 2 n=78	10.3	21.8	7.7	60.3
Group 4: Not Welfare, Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2 n=58	1.7	24.1	8.6	65.5
Group 5: Welfare, Time 1, Not Welfare Time 2 n=47	4.3	19.1	4.3	72.3
Group 6: Not Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2 n=395	1.0	8.6	5.8	84.6
Total	5.0 (41)	17.7 (145)	5.6 (46)	71.7 (587)

Percentages are row percents

$$\chi^2 = 105.31$$

15 df

$$p \leq 0.0000$$

went from very often (3) to hardly ever (0). The answers to these two items were added together for a psychological stress rating with possible scores from 0 to 6. For these preliminary crosstabs we divided the answers into two categories: low psychological stress and high psychological stress. Again, to see whether change or stability in welfare status from time 1 to time 2 is related to self-assessments of psychological stress at times 1 and 2, we combined the two measures:

High psychological stress, time 1 and time 2

Low Psychological stress, time 1; High stress, time 2

High stress, time 1; Low stress, time 2

Low stress, both time 1 and time 2.

Again, there is a relationship between being a welfare recipient and psychological stress. Women who were the most welfare dependent were twice as likely to report high psychological stress at both time 1 and time 2 than women who were not on welfare at either time. The change categories (women who were on welfare at one time and not the other) do not inform us about the causal direction of this relationship.

So far, our descriptive analyses has shown that, taken individually, social origin characteristics are not very related to welfare status; personal characteristics are more associated with welfare status; family characteristics, particularly family type, are intimately associated with welfare status; and physical and emotional well-being are very related to welfare status. However, we have not examined how these variables, taken together, explain and predict welfare status.

Table 10

Distribution of Psychological Stress  
by Welfare Status

	Hi Stress Time 1&2	Lo Stress Time 1 Hi Stress Time 2	Hi Stress Time 1, Lo Stress Time 2	Lo Stress Time 1&2
Group 1: Welfare, Time 1 and Time 2 N=140	47.9	17.1	28.6	6.4
Group 2: Not Welfare, Time 1, Welfare, Time 2 N=101	49.5	17.8	20.8	11.9
Group 3: Welfare, Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2 N=78	39.7	17.9	30.8	11.5
Group 4: Not Welfare, Time 1, Welfare and Other, Time 2 N=58	34.5	20.7	29.3	15.5
Group 5: Welfare, Time 1, Not Welfare Time 2 N=47	31.9	27.7	27.7	12.8
Group 6: Not Welfare, Time 1, and Time 2 N=395	23.3	21.8	34.2	20.8
Total	33.6	20.4	30.5	15.5

Percentages are row percents

$\chi^2 = .53, 92$

### Assessment of Joint Impact of these Characteristics

The next step in the analysis is to estimate the joint and relative impact of these independent and intervening variables on welfare status. In order to do this, we use a multiple regression model of path analysis with the social origin, personal, social, family and well-being characteristics included as independent and intervening variables and welfare status as the dependent variable.

Path analysis is a form of multivariate analysis designed to use a specified structure of presumed asymmetric causal relations among a set of variables along with their intercorrelations, to estimate the direct and indirect effects that the independent and intervening variables would be expected to have on the dependent variables (see Heise 1969; Gordon 1972; and Land 1969).

In using path analysis we make several assumptions. First, the investigator assumes that each of the variables is either an interval scale or a dichotomy. However, as Land and others (Land 1969; Boyle 1970) have asserted, relatively little error will be introduced if ordinal variables, such as those formed by indexes or scales are used. Second, change in one variable is assumed to be a linear function of change in one of the other variables. Third, the independent variables are assumed to be unassociated with each other.

None of these assumptions differ from those required by any regression analysis. However, path analysis requires further that the direction of causality be specified. Given the present state of social science, this assumption is often hazardous. Often, however, as in this study, time-order relationships help to eliminate certain possible causal directions and to specify others.

In spite of the problems imposed by these assumptions, path analysis has proved itself to be a useful technique. Perhaps one of its most beneficial impacts has been that in using path analysis, investigators are forced to specify the hypothesized causal links among their data. In so doing, both the theoretical and empirical ambiguities that exist become more obvious. Heise (1969) in a review of path analysis concludes that path analysis may be useful in social science, even though some of the assumptions may be weakened, as long as it is clear in the interpretation of the results that the path coefficients are only rough estimates and do not specify some ultimate and exact representation of the data. It is very much with this in mind that I present the following path analysis.

#### Model

Included in the path analysis model are all the variables that we described earlier in this chapter, plus the respondent's age.

The path model includes the following variables:

#### A. Social Origin Characteristics.

1. Whether respondent's family ever received aid as she was growing up. 1 = No, 2 = Yes.
2. Region of the Country where respondent grew up--North or South. 1 = South, 2 = North.

3. Size of the place where respondent grew up--a five point scale from very rural (1) to large city (5).
4. Respondent's age--Actual age in years at time 1.

B. Personal and Social Characteristics

1. Geographic mobility--a six point scale combining the two items used to measure geographic mobility: number of times the respondent had moved since her time 1 first grade child had been born (recoded so that 0 moves = 0, 1 move = 1, 2-3 moves = 2, and 4 or more moves = 3), and the number of years she had lived in Woodlawn (recoded so 7 or more years = 0, 4-6 years = 1, 2-3 years = 2, 1 or less = 3), the residential neighborhood for all the respondents at time 1. We then added the two scores together. The higher the number, the higher the mobility.
2. Education, time 1--The last grade in school the respondent had completed at time 1.

C. Family Characteristics

1. Number of Children--The number of children the respondent had at time 1.
2. Presence of preschool children, both time 1 and time 2--a dichotomous rating of whether the respondent had preschool children or not. 1 = Preschool children, 2 = No preschool children
3. Family Type--A four point index that combines time 1 and time 2 family type, used in the previous analysis. Family type is based on the presence or not of other adults living in the household. Following is the index:



1 = Respondent only adult in household at both time 1 and time 2.

2 = Respondent/other adult at time 1; respondent only adult at time 2.

3 = Respondent only adult, time 1; respondent/other adult time 2.

4 = Respondent/other adult at both time 1 and time 2.

#### D. Physical and Emotional Well-Being

1. Health, time 1--A dichotomous rating of whether the respondent had any physical condition that limited her activity. 1 = Unhealthy, 2 = Good Health.

2. Health, time 2--A four point self-rating of the respondent's health ranging from very healthy (4) to not at all healthy (1).

3. Psychological stress, both time 1 and time 2--A six point scale described earlier. 0 = No stress, 6 = Much stress.

E. Welfare--The dependent variable, welfare, is the same six point index described earlier with the lowest ranking being the most dependent on welfare and the highest being the least welfare dependent.

The ordering of the variables in the path model follows a time sequence with the background variables being the most exogenous, then pre-time 1 variables, then time 1 variables and time 2 variables. The correlations among the independent variables are shown in table 11.

As we see from this table the independent variables have low multi-

Table 11

Zero Order Correlations for Social, Personal,  
Family and Well-Being Characteristics and Welfare Status

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Parent's Received Aid (1)														
Respondent's Age (2)	.053													
Mobility (3)	-.089	-.213												
Urbaness (4)	.229	.048	-.036											
Region (5)	-.256	-.148	.001	-.643										
Preschooler, Time 1 (6)	-.043	-.179	.074	.009	.018									
Health, Time 1 (7)	-.001	-.079	-.053	.058	-.044	.012								
Number of Children (8)	.048	.166	.067	-.014	-.064	.188	.000							
Psychological Stress (9)	-.125	-.043	.137	-.052	.084	.042	-.137	.051						
Education (10)	.058	-.096	-.159	-.140	.168	-.055	.041	.200	-.168					
Preschooler, Time 2 (11)	-.029	-.151	.110	-.009	.041	.123	-.006	.141	-.003	-.099				
Health, Time 2 (12)	-.006	-.092	-.094	-.014	-.008	.065	.218	-.032	-.176	.175	.076			
Psychological Stress (2) (13)	-.086	.005	.112	-.053	.080	-.020	-.036	-.041	.256	-.093	-.036	.219		
Family Type (14)	.016	.145	-.214	.065	-.055	-.070	.019	-.006	-.138	.156	-.109	-.128	-.166	
Welfare Independence (15)	.066	.018	-.274	.090	-.059	-.055	.141	.244	-.197	.314	-.197	.292	-.216	

collinearity, satisfying one of the assumptions of path analysis.

The model explains close to half the variance of welfare status; see table 12. The variables were entered the regression equation in a stepwise algorithm in the order implied by the path model - the background variables entered first, the pre-time 1 second, time 1 third and time 2 fourth.

The family type variable accounts for almost half of this variance and strengthens the conclusion in the descriptive analysis; namely, that welfare status is intimately associated with family type and change in family type. Education, geographic mobility, number of children and respondent's health at both time 1 and time 2 each contribute at least a one percent change in the amount of variance explained. Figure 1 shows the path diagram relating welfare status to prior variables. All the paths that had a standardized beta above .10 are included; these all were statistically significant at  $p \leq .001$ . The path coefficients are standardized betas.

**Social Origin Variables--**First, none of the social origin variables had a significant, direct path to welfare status. None of these variables had zero-order correlations with welfare status above .10. We conclude that none of the social origin characteristics had a linear relationship to welfare status. However, the social origin variables did have a few indirect paths to welfare status. As might be expected, younger women had fewer children than older women, they had more mobility, they reported better health, and were better educated. Respondents who grew up in the North moved less and went further in school. Respondents who grew up in families that received welfare had less education and reported more psychological stress.

Net Effects of Social Origin, Personal and Family Characteristics  
on Welfare Independence

Independent Variables		Standardized Beta	R <sup>2</sup> Change
Social Origins	Whether Parents Received Aid	.003	0.004
	Whether grew up in North or South	-.022	0.002
	Urbaness of Place Grew Up	.054	0.004
Prior Time 1	Respondent's Age	-.024	0.000
	Education	.147***	0.110
	Geographic Mobility	-.103***	0.047
Time 1	Number of Children	-.188***	0.032
	Respondent's Health, time 1	.072**	0.013
	Presence of Preschool Child, time 1	.026	0.000
Time 2	Psychological	-.030	0.009
	Family Type	.453***	0.212
	Presence of Preschool Child, time 2	-.114***	0.009
	Psychological	-.062*	0.007
	Respondent's Health, time 2	-.162***	0.023
Total R <sup>2</sup>			0.471

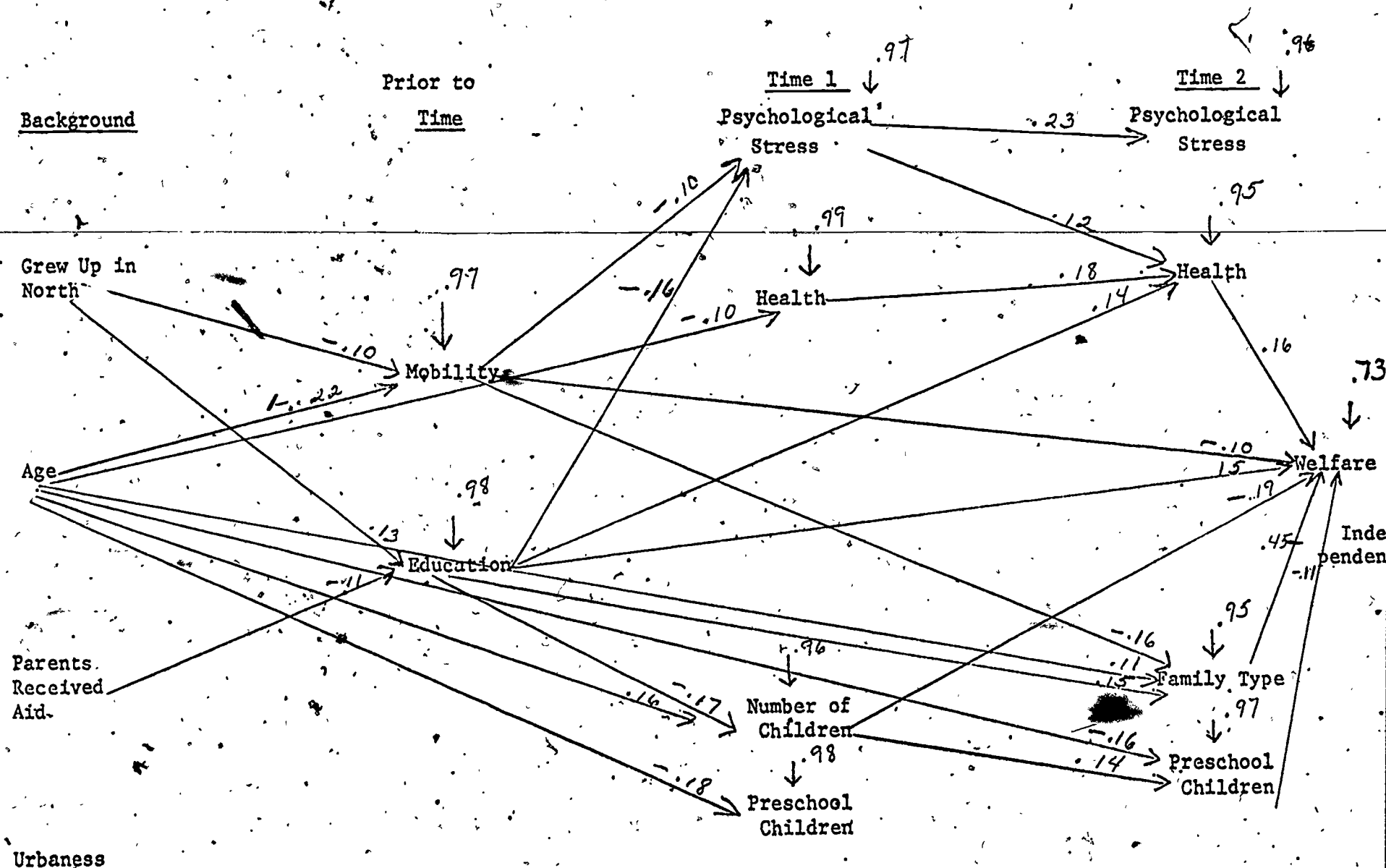
The Multiple R<sup>2</sup> change corresponding to each variable is derived from the regression equation estimating the effects on welfare status and all others preceding it-- those above in the table.

\* F- value for standardized beta significant at  $p \leq .05$

\*\* F- value for standardized beta significant at  $p \leq .01$

\*\*\* F- value for standardized beta significant at  $p \leq .001$

Figure 1



Path Diagram Relating Welfare Status to Prior Variables

Prior time 1 variables--Both education and geographic mobility had direct, as well as numerous indirect paths, to welfare status. Almost none of the respondents were in school at time 1 so the education they reported was obtained prior to time 1. The more educated women tended to be healthier, had fewer children, reported less psychological stress at time 1, and were more likely to be in a family in which there was another adult present.

Those women who were more geographically mobile prior to time 1 reported more psychological stress at time 1 and were less likely to be in a family with another adult present. Geographic mobility is independently related to welfare status, and may indicate, as we speculated earlier, that women who move frequently have fewer roots in their neighborhood and may be less able consequently to make the arrangements necessary for getting and keeping a job--child care arrangements and transportation. Its relationship to psychological stress supports Johnston's (1973) speculation that those who are more transient are likely to lead a more stressful life.

Time 1 Variables--The number of children at time 1 was the only time 1 variable that had a direct path to welfare status. Health at time 1 was related only to health at time 2. Psychological stress at time 1 was related to both health and psychological stress at time 2, but was not directly related to welfare status. The presence of preschool children at time 1 did not seem to matter for any of the succeeding variables.

Time 2 Variables--All the time 2 variables except psychological stress had a direct path to welfare status: respondents in poor health were more likely to be welfare dependent; the presence of preschool children was related to being on welfare and women with a second

adult in the family were less likely to be receiving welfare. All three of these variables were influenced by several of the antecedent variables.

### Discussion and Conclusions

We find that a multivariate causal analysis explains almost half of the variance in welfare status. In terms of a general model, family type is the single most crucial factor in influencing welfare status. Although traditionally in studies of welfare, family type has been defined on the basis of the presence or absence of a husband, in this study family type has been defined on the basis of the presence or absence of a second adult, regardless of the kind of second adult. While the majority of second adults are husbands of the respondents, many of them are not. The theoretical and policy implications of the close association between family type and welfare status are very important. Theoretically, these findings emphasize unambiguously how strong the relationship between the institutions of the family and the economy is. This finding is in contradiction to the Moynihan Report (1965) which stimulated interest and research on the black family.

The part of the Moynihan report that attracted the most attention and criticism was the assertion that the instability of the black family was no longer directly tied to economic conditions. According to Moynihan, family stability in the past had been directly related to short-term fluctuations of the business cycle and that this relationship no longer existed for the black community. He maintained that



while initially the high rates of separation and divorce among blacks were due to employment and economic conditions, now the black family is unstable because it is involved in a "tangle of pathology." His report implied that priority in government programming should be to strengthen the black family rather than to increase the employment rate or to better economic conditions. Our results show that at least in the community of this study, the family and economic situation are very related, and that the family structure and change in family structure is closely associated with the economic independence and change in economic independence of the family.

A major policy implication of these results is that any welfare program or income maintenance program will affect family structure. This impact should be anticipated in planning the program. A welfare program that is, for all practical purposes, designed for families in which a woman is the only adult may have the consequence of increasing the proportion of families that are headed by women.

Early geographic mobility is also causally related to welfare independence—this result suggests that rootlessness and lack of social support influence a woman's welfare status. This result, plus the results that tie family type, presence of preschool children and number of children to welfare, imply that providing sources of social supports may be important policy considerations. Provision of day care is an obvious way to increase the social supports of a child rearing woman. Expanding job opportunities not only decreases the need for welfare, but increases the individual's social contacts.

Theoretically, these results suggest that we should examine in a more direct way the relationship between welfare status and a woman's



social networks and social integration. The kin supports, social relationships, and participation in community organizations may all influence welfare status.

The relative unimportance of the social origin characteristics is encouraging from a policy perspective. The impact of whether one's family of origin received welfare or the characteristics of where one grows up are less amenable to change or intervention than are the more current, life circumstances of the individual.

Also apparent in the findings is the advantage that the more educated respondents have. Besides being less welfare dependent, they report being healthier, less nervous and sad, and less likely to be the only adult in the family. In this relatively homogeneous population, more years of schooling was associated with better well-being.

Two studies have recently suggested that the advantage of more educated persons results more from their social background characteristics than it does from the actual schooling (Jencks et al. 1972; Boudon 1974). Both of these studies are based on data from national samples. It may be that education is less important when diverse groups are being compared, but very important in differentiating successful individuals from less successful individuals in more homogeneous populations. More educated individuals compared to their peers may be more competent to achieve in modern society and also have a legitimacy that enables them to demand more status and authority.

We speculated earlier on the relative importance of broader societal-wide structural characteristics versus one's more immediate life conditions. On the one hand, this is difficult to assess in this population - the respondents are all black, all women and all were

living in an urban, poor community. The variation in societal-wide characteristics is limited. However, there is variation on certain social structural characteristics such as education, region where one grew up, welfare of the family of origin and the respondents' own welfare status.

While social origin characteristics had little impact on later welfare status, education was an independent and strong antecedent not only of later welfare status but also of the more immediate personal circumstances such as emotional and physical well-being and family characteristics. These were, in turn, also independently and strongly related to welfare status. Based on the findings from this study, we can only conclude that both broader social differentiation and more immediate life circumstances are important.

It is important to note that psychological stress is not related to welfare status when included in a multivariate analysis. Psychological stress may be more a result of one's welfare status (or occupational success, in general) than a cause. This issue will be explored further.

Physical health, on the other hand, did distinguish between the more and less welfare dependent. Less healthy women were more likely to stay on welfare if welfare recipients and more likely to become welfare recipients if not already receiving welfare.

By examining the social origins, personal, well-being and family characteristics of women in a high-risk community we can differentiate between those who are high-risk and those who are lower risk for

welfare dependence. These studies, while only conducted in one community area, provide a basis for both social policy and theoretical considerations. The aloneness of the child rearing woman in urban areas is undoubtedly worthy of more study and attention, for both policy and theory building.

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